

# **Point Defiance Bypass Project**

***Tillicum Woodbrook Neighborhood Assoc.***

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# What is the Point Defiance Bypass Project?

- Existing line along lightly used freight corridor owned by Sound Transit
- Part of bypass route also used for “Sounder” commuter service
- Work includes track upgrades, new tracks, safety equipment, etc.
- Results in added round trips between Seattle and Portland and improved reliability (on-time performance).



# Environmental Assessment Process

	Technical Input	NEPA Process (National Environmental Policy Act) Purpose and Need	Community Input
Summer/Fall 2010	Screening criteria	Identify recommended opportunities for study	Open houses/ citizen input
2011		Update and expand detailed environmental studies	Informal Outreach On-going
Winter/Spring 2012		Prepare environmental assessment	Informal Outreach On-going
Summer 2012	Regulatory Agency Comments  Agency Review/Input	<b>Public Review of Environmental Assessment Public Meeting</b>	Public comments on Environmental Assessment
Summer 2013*		<b>Federal Rail Administration NEPA Decision</b>	

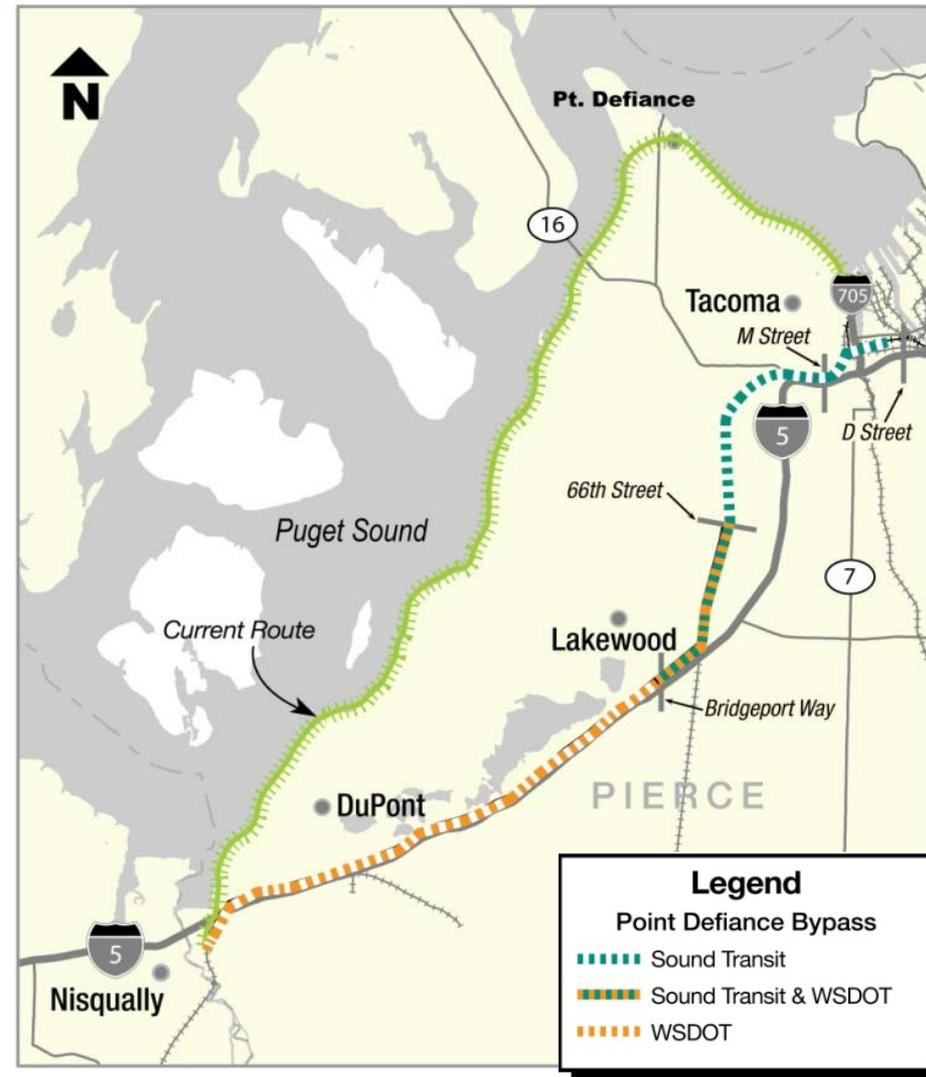
We are here

Issue EA

# High Speed Passenger Rail Alternatives

*What alternatives for the Point Defiance Bypass project is WSDOT evaluating?*

- No-action alternative (required under NEPA)
- Point Defiance Bypass route (WSDOT's proposed action)
- Point Defiance Shoreline route (existing BNSF main line)
- "Greenfield" or new alignment



“Budgets are tight. Can WSDOT repurpose this money?”

# Critical investments

- Funding must be for rail projects
- Generates economic development and job growth
- More travel options
- Addresses increasing ridership and demand



“How fast will trains travel through Lakewood?”

# Train Speeds

- Amtrak *Cascades* trains
  - maximum of 79 mph
- Sounder Commuter trains
  - average 40 mph
  - maximum speed of 60 mph
- Tacoma Rail trains
  - Maximum speed of 40 mph\*



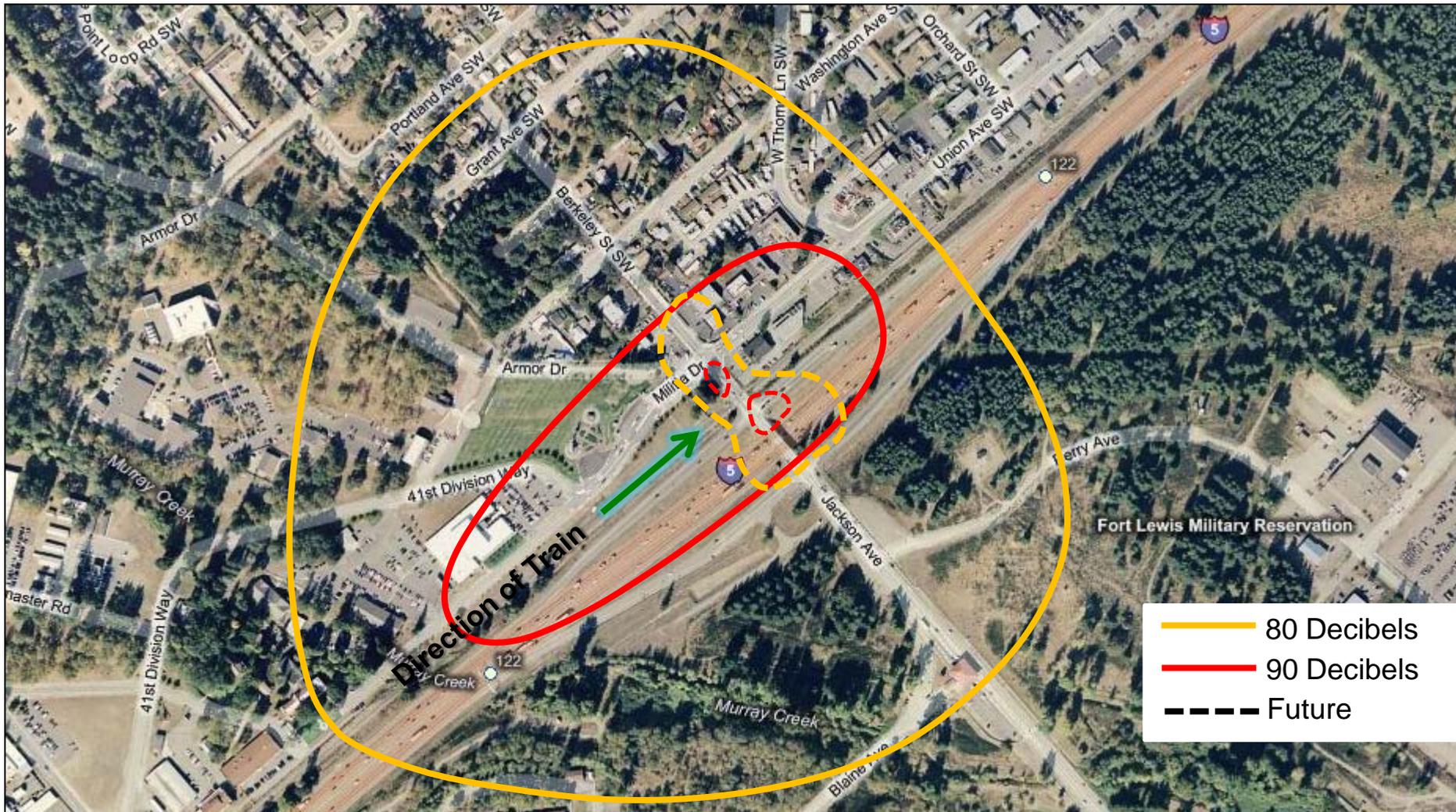
\* Occurs when Tacoma Rail upgrades its controlled track dispatch system

“Won’t these trains bring more noise and vibration?”

# Noise and Vibration

- Continuous-weld track reduces “clickety-clack”
- Trains only operate between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- Sturdier track foundation reduces track vibration
- Steady speeds
  - less wear and tear to track and train wheels
  - Reduced vibration
- Wayside Horns
  - direct audible warnings at crossings significantly shrink noise impact area

# Noise – Current and proposed future levels

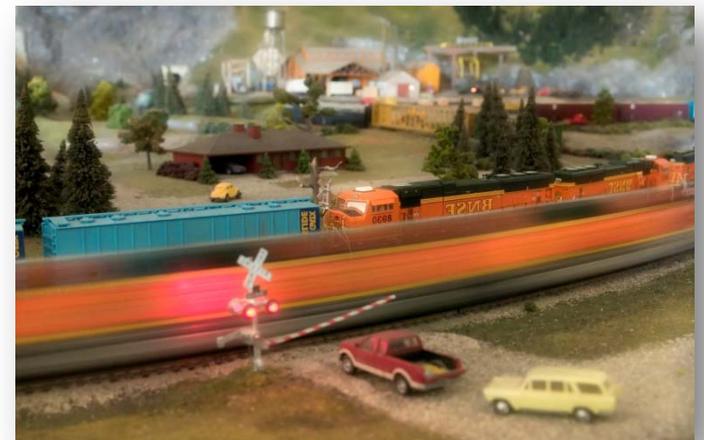


Berkeley Street, Lakewood, WA

“How will these trains affect the already challenging traffic congestion?”

# Traffic

- Only two trains per day travel through Lakewood during peak travel times.
- [Approx. 45 sec. to clear a crossing](#)
- Synchronized signals greatly improve traffic flow



“Are grade separations part of the plan through Lakewood?”

# Grade Separation

- Significant property impacts
- Reduced business access
- Typically requires closing other crossings
- Large retaining walls or bridge structures
  - Potential graffiti magnets
  - Viaducts potentially attractive for illegal activity



“What will WSDOT do to prevent collisions and fatalities?”

# Safety: Rail collisions are preventable

- Trespassing
  - Being on the tracks is trespassing – trespassing is **illegal**
  - Tracks are not a trail, bike path or play area
  - Don't stand close to tracks, trains overhang rails by at least 3 ft.
- Grade crossings
  - Obey all warning signals, gates and signs
  - Stop at the white stop line – not on the tracks

# Safety: A balanced approach

## *The 3 E's*

- **Education**

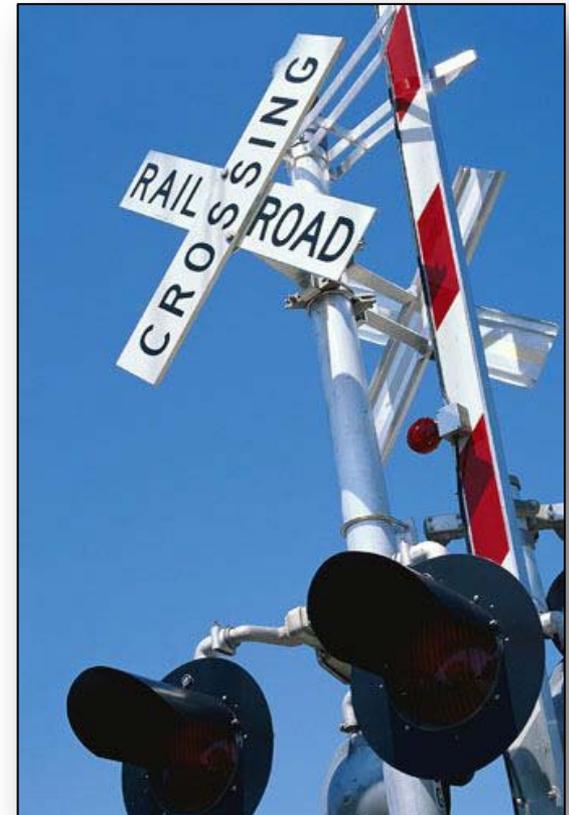
- Targeting schools, community events and town meetings
- Reinforce and support Operation Lifesaver

- **Engineering**

- Active warning devices at all rail/road grade crossings
- Upgraded traffic signals, wider lanes, and increased turning radii
- Pavement markings and roadway medians
- Wayside horns

- **Enforcement**

- Emphasis patrols at key problem areas



“Is this worth it to  
save six minutes?”

# On-time Performance

Program success measured by Amtrak *Cascades* service reliability and on-time performance.

*What is reliability?*

- Arriving and departing when scheduled
- Currently, we average 62%
  - This means missed travel connections, appointments, and lost time with family and friends



“Should WSDOT be conducting  
and Environmental Impact  
Statement?”

# Environmental Impacts

- WSDOT performing EIS level work throughout this process
- EIS is the next level in environmental review
- EIS identifies all impacts; doesn't necessarily require mitigation

“Will this work affect future highway improvements?”

# Coordinating future work

- Project does not preclude future expansion
  - I-5 expansion
  - SR 704 Cross Base Highway
- Coordinating transportation projects with other agencies
  - City of Lakewood
  - Camp Murray
  - JBLM

“How will this benefit my community?”

# Improvements in the community

## Planned improvements:

- Improved signal timing at intersections
- Upgraded crossing safety features

## Potential improvements:

- Bike/pedestrian trails and sidewalks
- Connectivity between Tillicum and Lakewood
- Improved traffic operations



# For more information

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